

Priorities for Rapid Response Competitively Funded Projects Funding Approach

Beginning with Program Year (PY) 2004-05, the State will award a portion of the Rapid Response reserve funds for Rapid Response Allowable Activities special projects. For PY 2004-05, approximately \$3,000,000 is available.

The State will rate proposals for this funding based on the following factors:

WIA and Administrative Requirements

All proposals for allowable Rapid Response funding must conform to Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Rapid Response allowable activities (Title 20 CFR 665.320).

Each Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) may only receive one Rapid Response Allowable Activities special project grant. Each grant will not exceed \$250,000. Proposals that the State rates highly will be funded. The State will reserve as Additional Assistance any funds not awarded from this segment of Rapid Response funding.

Return on Investment

As Rapid Response funding is becoming increasingly limited, the State is requiring that each proposal be evaluated for the return on investment. The following factors will be considered for each proposal:

- Past performance regarding the implementation of past Rapid Response “allowable activity” grants;
- Effects/benefits/outcomes;
- Exportability
- Cost effectiveness; and
- Sustainability

State Priorities

The Governor has adopted the following priorities, recommended by the California Workforce Investment Board, for use in awarding 25 Percent Rapid Response Allowable Activities grants in PY 2004-05.

1. Lay-off Aversion—Funding to develop plans to identify and assist employers at risk of layoffs due to competitive factors.
 - Local areas identify partnerships with private organizations that provide job training, including employers and/or private training providers, in order to leverage training opportunities for clients and minimize duplication of training efforts.

- Local areas establish partnerships with private organizations, such as employers, economic development organizations and Chambers of Commerce, to gather information on changing workforce needs due to changes in the economy to ensure that the WIA-funded training is current and relevant.
2. Innovation—Projects funded under this category are intended to support innovative efforts to expand or redesign local rapid response systems to become more responsive to local businesses, large and small.
 3. Small Business Services—As the majority of California’s workforce is employed by small businesses, it is not feasible to provide on-site service to all California businesses that employ less than 10 workers. Therefore, innovation will be required to serve California’s small businesses in a systematic manner.
 4. Regional Impact—Projects under this category are intended to support efforts focused on regional industries and labor markets that are identified through funded endeavors (Regional Economies Project, local grants, etc.) as emerging, critical, and/or changing.